

Milk-net Project

428. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a Rs. 8 crore Milk-net-an Information Technology-based project has been planned by the National Dairy Development Board which would be executed by the Rajasthan Electronics and Instruments Ltd., aiming to bring transparency in the collection, transportation and processing of milk and ensure timely payments to producers while maintaining quality at all levels; and

(b) if so, whether a study of the same is proposed to be made with a view to its adoptability in selected places initially?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir. NDDB has not planned any such project.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Gross capital formation in Agriculture Sector

429. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage share of gross capital formation (investment) to GDP, in Agriculture Sector (excluding allied sector) during the last ten years and how it compares with the percentage of GDP invested in other sectors as capital inputs;

(b) the total number of persons dependent on agriculture and the percentage it constitutes of the rural population and total population of the country;

(c) the number of work force employed in agriculture sector and other allied sectors, and percentage thereof;

(d) whether the above scenario shows a gross neglect of agriculture sector; and

(e) if so, the corrective steps taken to re-energize the agriculture sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The percentage share of Gross Capital Formation (investment) to GDP in agriculture (excluding allied sector) in comparison to that of other sectors during the last ten years is given in the table below:

Year	Investment in Agriculture (excluding allied sectors) as percentage of GDP As per 1993-94 series	Investment in Other sectors as percentage of GDP
1996-97	1.6	21.3
1997-98	1.5	20.4
1998-99	1.3	17.9
As per 1999-2000 series		
1999-2000	2.2	23.1
2000-01	1.9	21.5
2001-02	2.2	21.0
2002-03	2.1	22.3
2003-04	1.9	23.8
2004-05	1.9	26.4
2005-06	2.0	29.0

Source: Central Statistical Organisation

(b) and (c) As per Census of India 2001, the total number of persons dependent on Agriculture is about 23.41 crore (i.e., 12.73 crore cultivators and 10.68 crore agricultural labourers). It constitutes about 31.5 percent of the rural population, and 22.8 percent of total population of the country. The estimated number of persons employed in agricultural & allied activities as per the National Sample Survey (NSS) Report No. 515 on Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, 2004-05 (latest available) is more than 23.88 crore. This accounts for 58.48 percent of the total workforce.

(d) and (e) Investment in the agriculture sector has been lower compared to that in the other sectors. Some of the major steps initiated by the Central Government to re-energise the agriculture sector are given below:

- * Implementation of Integrated Cereal Development Programme (ICDP) in Rice, Wheat and other Cereal-based cropping system areas, Sustainable Development of Sugarcane based cropping system and Special Jute Development Programme.

- * Launching of Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) for raising the yield potential of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize.
- * Announcement of enhanced Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) well before the commencement of sowing season to enable farmers to decide on the choice of crops to be grown by them.
- * Agricultural diversification through horticulture and floriculture.
- * Development/strengthening of modern agricultural markets through creation of space for attracting investment from private and cooperative sectors for the development of direct marketing and contract farming.
- * Re-orientation of the credit facility, especially production credit, to rural and farmer households at concessional rate of interest.
- * Re-vitalization of Agricultural research to ensure full exploitation of scientific advances for improving productivity according to agro-climatic conditions.
- Re-vitalization of Agricultural extension system through Krishi Vigyan Kendras in each district and making extension system more farmer friendly by way of autonomous institutional arrangements for technological dissemination through "Agricultural Technology Management Agency" (ATMA) at district level.
- The newly approved National Rainfed Area Authority is expected to deal with the problems faced by rainfed areas.
- National Horticulture Mission is under implementation to boost area and production of horticulture crops through establishing backward and forward linkages.

Increase in farm insurance

430. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are likely to spend an additional Rs. 250 crores in 2007-08 on farm insurance over and above the average of Rs. 650 crores spent on the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS);